

SUMMARY OF SAS INSTITUTE
DECEMBER 5-8, 2010

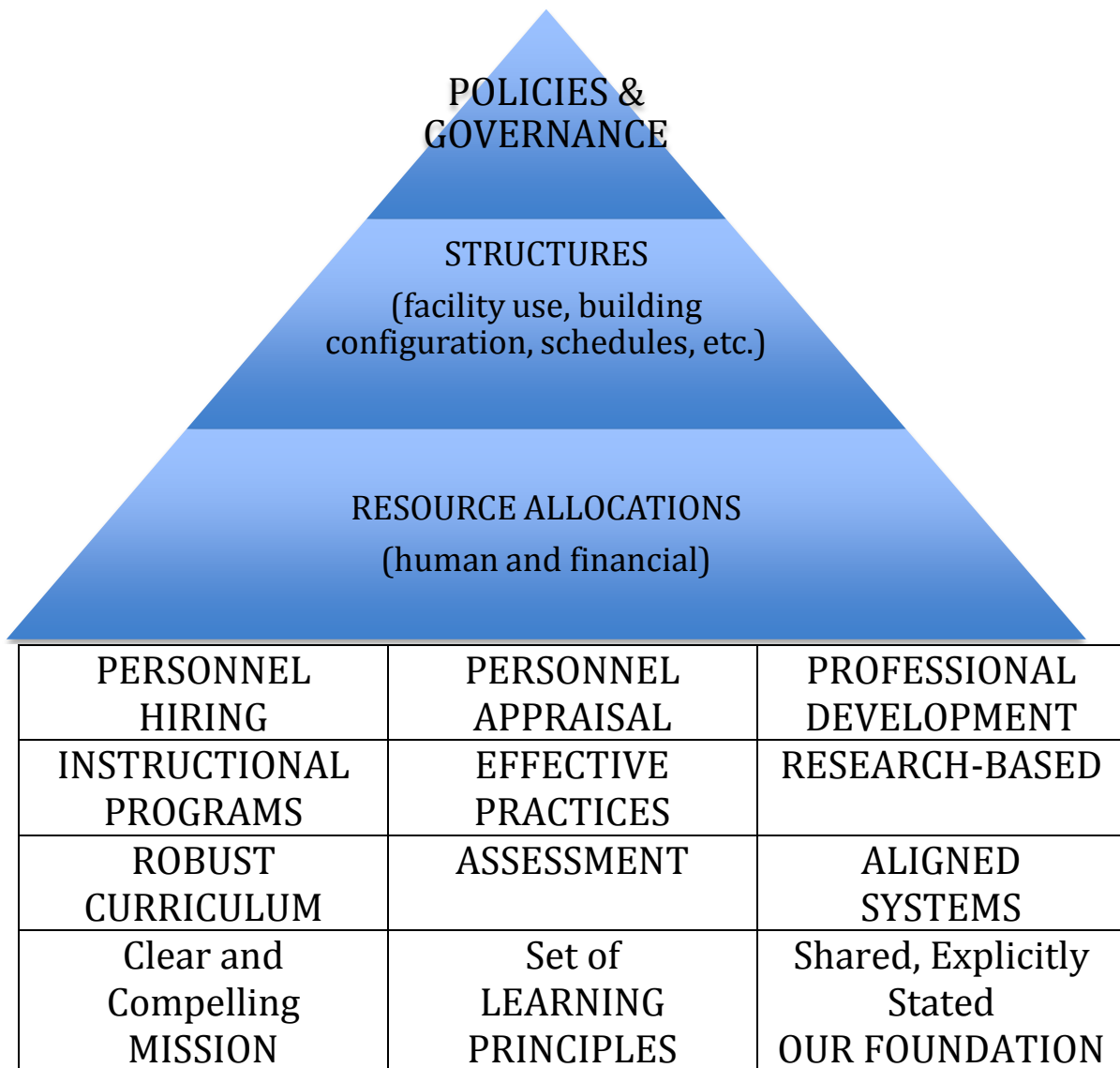
Professional educators in PA need to become informed about/stay current on the following:

1. What SAS is and all of its components (standards, curriculum maps, voluntary model curriculum, Learning Progressions, fair assessments, interventions, etc.)
2. Keystone Exams (their potential for replacing the 11th grade PSSA and their role in graduation requirements for this year's 7th & 8th graders)
3. Recognition that Keystone Exams are not just a concern for high schools
4. Keystone Exams are based on Common Core standards, which are more rigorous than PA standards
5. Common Core standards have been adopted by 41 states and apply to schools K-12; they are known as "college- and work-ready standards" for 21st century teaching and learning and require higher level thinking and problem-solving; they depend on the implementation of authentic learning tasks and assessments to enable students to be successful
6. Backward Design (McTighe & Wiggins) and the Response to Instruction & Intervention (RtII) model as critical frameworks for planning and implementing effective teaching
7. Recognize that federal funds may be tied to a mandatory teacher and principal evaluation system that considers student performance as a factor; Danielson's teacher evaluation framework is currently used in PDE 426, 427, 428 evaluation forms; her framework is one of five currently being studied by the Gates Foundation in partnership with the US Dept of Education

Below is a fairly extensive summary of the information presented at the Institute. In addition to the SAS Portal, a suggested resource is *Schooling by Design* by Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins (2007).

- General purpose of the Institute was to update attendees with latest additions to PDE's Standards Aligned System (SAS), Common Core standards, and Keystone Exams, as well as provide information about McTighe's Backward Design and Danielson's framework for teacher evaluation
- Attendees were reminded of the political transition about to take place and possible ramifications; many things up in the air and PDE unable to say for absolute certain what new administration will keep, change, do in regard to educational direction in PA, BUT everyone is very confident that SAS will remain based on its robust, comprehensive collection of resources organized around PA standards and tailored to enable students to be successful to newly implemented Keystone Exams
- Many spoke throughout the Institute about the very favorable comments circulating around the state about the quality of the information contained in SAS; Jay McTighe (see below) stated that PA's SAS is the most robust resource of any state in the nation
- Many educators have had significant input into developing materials and resources in SAS (i.e., 14 of the 21 people who developed the biology curriculum map were educators currently working in public school)
- Two highly renown educators and published researchers presented at the Institute: Jay McTighe and Charlotte Danielson
- Jay McTighe:
 - Co-author with Grant Wiggins, most famous for presenting and more fully developing Backward Design model (BD) as framework for thinking about teaching and learning, not only limited in its use as a framework for developing lesson and unit plans, but more broadly, as a framework for developing programs and framing the work of organizations (backward design was first presented to the education community in 1949 (Tyler)—so this is not new information)

- Early work: *Understanding by Design* and more recent work: *Schooling by Design*; McTighe stated that he and Wiggins want to “go out” on this book, view it as the capstone of their career in education
- BD basically asks three major questions for lesson/unit planning:
 - What should students know, understand, and be able to do (KUD); what learning objectives have been identified?
 - How will we know what they KUD? (assessment piece is the next thing we think about—rather than an afterthought); What will the assessment look like? What specific information will it give us about the learning that took place (or didn’t take place)?
 - How will we make it happen? What instructional strategies, resources, materials, environment, etc., will we put in place to ensure stated objectives will be met?
- BD as applied to an organization—McTighe used house metaphor:



- Use backward design with the end goals in mind (as encapsulated by our mission & learning principles)
- Every facet of schooling in place must be directly related to reaching our goals
- Mission and Learning Principles guide actions; our work must drive policies, structures, governance, & resource allocation, etc.—rather than the reverse; schooling must be FOUNDATION UP rather than ROOF DOWN, which is most often the case
- FORM follows FUNCTION (basic engineering tenet)
- Encouraged schools to develop Educational Bill of Rights—and explicit articulation of belief statements that support mission statement (McTighe’s learning principals found in Chapter 4 of *SBD* book)
- Used sailing metaphor: How is a school’s mission like the keel of a boat?
 - Provides stability when sailing
 - Buffers the effects of strong winds and currents
 - Helps you stay on course
- The Learning Principles function like the rudder and sails
 - Guide needed adjustments
 - Harness and make use of strong winds
 - Helps keep you on course
- **ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS** McTighe suggests to examine our current work:
 - Do we have clear and contemporary school mission?
 - To what extent do staff, students, and parents know our mission?
 - To what extent does our mission directly influence our actions? (If it does, we should see evidence of it in our classrooms and embedded in our curriculum and practice.)
 - Are we true to our mission?
 - Are critical and creative thinking evidenced in our tasks and assessments?
 - What do we believe about learning?
 - What are the common/predictable misconceptions, skill deficits or performance weaknesses?
 - What specific approaches, strategies, resources are available and are working?
 - Is data driven improvement planning in place?
- McTighe also introduced concept of CORNERSTONE ASSESSMENTS which:
 - anchor the curriculum around important, recurring tasks
 - require thorough understanding and transfer of learning
 - provide evidence of authentic accomplishments; understanding is revealed through contextualized performance
 - involve “doing the subject” comparable to “playing the game” or “performing in the concert”, using a sports and music parallel
 - include recurring tasks repeated over grade levels with increasing difficulty and complexity; students get better at it over time
 - go beyond state tests (that are very limited in telling us what students know, understand and can do)
- Development of cornerstone assessments have begun and will be an integral component in SAS as a resource for teachers

COMMON CORE STANDARDS(CCS):

- Compiled by Chief Council of School Offices and endorsed by National Governor's Association; adopted by 41 states
- Adopted by PA State Board of Education on July 1, 2010, with a three-year transition plan in place
- About CCS:
 - Much more rigorous than current PA state standards; very true for math
 - English/Language Arts: two strands:
 - Content standards for English/LA courses
 - Literacy standards for all other content areas
 - CCS do not have assessment anchors (as is true of PA standards)
 - SAS will include CCS as transition occurs—crosswalk tool and curriculum maps currently being developed will serve as transition tools; Publish Your Best documents will include both sets of standards (educators are encouraged to submit effective learning units, assessments, maps, etc.; all submissions will go before review team; all items on SAS are reviewed and vetted for quality)
 - **Keystone Exams are aligned to CCS**
 - **Huge implications for K-12 schools in PA—not just High Schools**
 - Plan for transition: series of workshops throughout PA via IUs, PDE webcasts/videoconferences, PaTTAN; professional organization conferences
- Questions posed regarding CCS:
 - Will CCS become a national curriculum?
 - Cannot conclude at this time
 - Will science and social CCS be adopted by PA?
 - Assume yes, but cannot say for certain due to political transition
 - What do districts do now to prepare for CCS?
 - Need to start to balance enhanced 2009 PA standards with CCS; need to “shelve” 2002 version!
 - Recommend waiting until February to make significant revisions; this is SAS target date for uploading CCS (as well as many additional resources)
 - Are there plans to add PA standards to CCS
 - States are permitted to add 15% more to CCS

KEYSTONE EXAMS:

- Evolution of Keystone Exams as graduation requirement
- See <http://www.pdesas.org/Assessment/Graduation> for extensive information
- Requirements in a nutshell:
 - Phase 1: For Class of 2015 & 2016 (this year's 7th & 8th graders)
 - Responsible for being proficient in Algebra I, Biology, Literature, English Composition
 - Phase 2: For Class of 2017 (this year's 6th graders)
 - There will be 10 exams total; proficiency in 6 of 10 exams required for graduation in PA (English Composition, Literature, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry, American History, American Government, World History)
 - Responsible for demonstrating proficiency in 2 of 2 English, 2 of 3 math, 1 of 2 sciences, 1 of 3 social studies

School District graduation policies must at a minimum include:

- Satisfactory completion of required courses/passing grades in required courses
- Satisfactory completion of culminating project
- Demonstrated proficiency in each state standard
- Demonstrated proficiency in each main subject as determined by:
 - Keystone Exam counting as at least 33% of course grade, OR
 - Independently-validated local assessment, OR
 - Keystone Exam as stand-alone graduation requirement, OR
 - Satisfactory score on AP or IB exam (assumed this may be a score of 3 or better)
 - (There was some conversation that districts can use Keystone Exam as end-of-course exam and determine weighting in averaging it in with course grade for course credit, but if weighting is less than 33%, student would still need to demonstrate proficiency on KE to fulfill graduation requirement. There was some confusion around this option for some of us, so stay tuned!)
 - All students can “test out” of course if they score advanced on KE prior to taking course, at district discretion
 - Comprehensive project in given content area after two failures on KE for that content area
 - Strongly suggested that project be embedded throughout course for all students—and can be further refined and presented as the necessary evidence for proficiency when applicable
- Guidelines for special education students:
 - Students with IEP should take KE or local assessment with accommodations as indicated on IEP as soon as possible after completing regular course
 - IEP students can retake KE during any subsequent administration
 - IEP team will determine what assessment students will take if they are enrolled in a replacement course
 - IEP students can still graduate on IEP goals (contradicts what was published earlier)

Status of AYP:

- PA in process of petitioning USDE to shift to KE as AYP measure at high school
 - Algebra I and Literature KEs would replace PSSA math and reading in calculating AYP
 - English Composition and Biology KEs would replace PSSA writing and science
- PA petitioning that 11th grade PSSA will cease to exist with implementation of KE
- May not have approval from USDE until KEs can be determine valid and reliable; need at least two years of data to make determination

Administration of KE:

- Three administrations of KE each year
 - August/September timeframe to accommodate any summer remediation or testing out of course
 - December/January timeframe for schools with block scheduling
 - Early May timeframe to permit turnaround for scoring in time for determining if graduation requirements have been met

Keystone Resources

- Course curriculum maps are being developed by educators; algebra I, biology, literature maps are in final stages of development (will likely be under teacher tools in curriculum mapping tool)
 - Curriculum maps:

- Have same organizational structure and are aligned to standards
- Include materials and resources
- List competencies
- Include Tier 3 vocabulary

Keystone Exams, in general:

- Eligible content is a little different than PSSA
- Tests are much more robust; teachers must study eligible content
- Eligible content IS NOT curriculum
- All eligible content will be assessed (no rotation of content on test from year to year)
- Also posted on website are performance learning descriptors (PLDs) organized under BB, B, P, and A in draft form
- CONTENT is not enough—reading strategies in each content area is IMPERATIVE! Reading Apprenticeship training was endorsed as very critical for secondary teachers
- Student and school profile results will come back from field tests, but SHOULD NOT be used to address individual student concerns because students got different test; PURPOSE OF FIELD TEST WAS TO review questions
- Wide range of items on test: teachers believe that what is on test should be eligible content (school based teachers expressed concern that there are algebra II items on algebra I test)—question for schools to answer: is current curriculum what it should be?

Voluntary Model Curriculum Maps (VMCM)

- Used biology VMCM as example
- Begins with table of contents that lists units (not necessarily in same order from district to district)
- Maps are not 100% ready to be posted on Portal; soliciting feedback to revise as necessary and improve quality of maps
- Maps will be posted on SAS in February 2011
 - Some of the maps that are currently posted under teacher tools are practice maps; they will only be visible on site for schools that created them; after February, the only three we will see are for algebra I, biology, and literature
- Map tool is a TOOL--not to be confused with voluntary model curriculum, but to be used as a resource in designing common course assignment and assessments for targeted courses
- Maps serve as a foundational piece (base or springboard for curriculum, not all-inclusive of what can be included in course curriculum)
- If students have not had the exposure and experience at “Doing” content (performance aspect) they will not be successful on KE!

The SAS/RtII Connection

(RtII is Response to Instruction & Intervention)

- Are we making sure that all students are getting access to rigorous curriculum?
- Saw SAS (and best practices), Data, and RtII as the three sides of the RTII triangle
 - Tier 1 represents all receiving **same** rigorous curriculum, materials & resources, fair assessments, standards, instruction
 - Smaller number (perhaps 20% or less) receive Tier 2 interventions in addition to regular curriculum (supplement not supplant)
 - Students with greatest need receive Tier 3
 - “If we are seeing large numbers (greater than 20%) receiving Tier 2 or 3 interventions, there is something WRONG with our Tier 1.”
 - Multiple purposes of RtII framework

- As model for identifying students for special education services
- School-wide positive behavior framework
- Actually, it is a comprehensive school reform model
- Research
 - Over 30 websites displaying lists of “evidence-based” programs and practices
 - More than 600 evidence-based programs and practices that have been assessed and deemed evidence-based
 - We already know Marzano’s work
 - We know the “what” but “how” are we going to get there? Need to continue to examine the “what/how” gap
 - Why do we fail at the implementation phase?
 - What doesn’t work?
 - Dissemination of information alone isn’t enough
 - Training alone isn’t enough—no matter how well done
 - Implementation by edict does not work
 - Implementation by following the \$ does not work
 - **Implementation doesn’t work without changing supporting roles, functions, structure of schooling**
 - The research of Joyce and Showers (2002) demonstrates that the study of theory, demonstrations, and supported practice can provide teachers with knowledge and skills, but only **peer coaching** provides the support to assure that the training is effectively transferred to the classroom. With peer coaching, 95% of teachers will be able to transfer training effectively to their classrooms, as compared to 0% for either the study of theory and demonstration, and 5% transfer of training through supported practice (Joyce, B. & Showers, B., 2002).

CHARLOTTE DANIELSON

- Assessing teacher effectiveness; landscape has changed dramatically in recent months
- Purposes of teacher evaluation
 - Quality assurance (non-negotiable)
 - Promoting professional learning
 - Two basic approaches—fundamentally different
 - Access teacher practices
 - Assess the results of a teacher through student learning
 - We are headed for high stakes and low rigor if we are not thorough and thoughtful in how we will proceed right now (an example of high rigor/high stakes is National Board Certification Evaluation)
 - Evaluations must be public with shared understanding of what is expected—what good teaching is and looks like
- Teacher Evaluation System
 - What (constitutes evaluation)
 - Evaluative criteria
 - Levels of performance
 - Weighting of different variables
 - Score combining
 - Standard setting: how good is good enough?

- How (do teachers demonstrate skills)
 - What are the procedures for demonstrating teacher skills?
 - What instruments are used?
 - What personnel are charged with evaluation?
 - What timelines are in place?
 - Due process for evaluation
- Process for deciding the system?
- Training for evaluators
- Professional development for professional staff
- Major research is being conducted today using 5 protocols for evaluation of thousands of hours of teaching over two years (Danielson's is 1 of 5 being used); **Gates Foundation is partnering with USDE to develop a teacher evaluation tool that could be mandated at the state level (tied to federal funds)**
- Four domains—all research-based
 - Planning, Classroom Environment, Instructional Delivery Professionalism
 - Make note of second standard in Domain 2: "Establishing a culture for learning"
 - How do we facilitate the growth of a culture where learning is COOL?
 - Do students get this sense from their teachers?
 - Our challenge is making mastery of hard content interesting, engaging and cool?
 - Frameworks such as this is grounded in some assumptions
 - Teaching is hard work—physically
 - Teaching is demanding emotionally
 - Teaching is challenging intellectual work; teachers make hundreds of decisions daily—in a hurry and under sometimes extreme circumstances
 - Teaching is a thinking person's job
 - If we accept that teaching is cognitive work, then the conversations we have about teaching must be cognitive—about thinking and decision-making
 - Question when we are observing teaching should be "is this working?"—not "is this how I would do it?"
- A look at the levels of performance—requires professional judgment—must resist urge to quantify
 - Unsatisfactory—our first obligation has to be to students, so this descriptor must remain on evaluation form; we know what unsatisfactory looks like and that it exists—albeit rarely
 - Basic—where most new teachers are, veteran teachers who move to new grade level or subject until they get adjusted, marginal teachers
 - Proficient—good, solid, effective teaching—where everyone must be
 - Distinguished—over the-top-teaching
- **"Learning is done by the learner through active engagement; they don't learn on account of what we do, but rather on account of what *they* do" (Danielson).**
- If we are serious about promoting authentic and powerful evaluation, the process must include self-evaluation, reflection, and professional conversation. It is the thinking that counts!
- Summary
 - A research-based definition of good teaching
 - Roadmap to and for navigating through complex territory of teaching
 - Most powerful use of framework is by teachers for self-reflection
 - Benefit of any framework is common definitions and shared understanding of expectations

